

SlutWalk Toronto - #SWTO2012: My Body Is Not An Insult

Friday May 25, Nathan Phillips Square, 5 pm

SlutWalk, dubbed by some a 'movement', is a demonstration against blaming and shaming the victims of sexual violence that began in Toronto in 2011. On April 3, 2011, with less than 6 weeks of preparation by a few dedicated volunteers, 4000 people took to the streets of Toronto to demand accountability from the Toronto Police and their communities after officer Michael Sanguinetti told a group of students at York University "I'm told I'm not supposed to say this, but women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized."

Sanguinetti's comment lit the spark of what turned into a global firestorm of anger, empowerment and lively protest around the world to combat victim-blaming after SWTO 2011, including regions of the world like Central and South America, Europe and the UK, all over Canada and the US, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Singapore, Korea, Israel, Nepal, Romania, and many others by 'SlutWalk' and other locally-chosen names. In the last year the outcry, reactions to SlutWalks, massive collective action and public response to SlutWalk has made it clear that the founders of SWTO were not the only ones who had had enough of rape apologism and victim-blaming.

In Canada, 50% of women will experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and women who are differently-abled, Indigenous, of colour, trans, sex workers, without status, face massively increased risk. Men and boys are also victims of sexual violence and face a particular set of barriers in having their experiences socially recognized. Because rates and severity of victimization parallel the levels of discrimination faced by certain communities, we know that sexual violence is not about the victim; but is a social, systemic issue.

SlutWalk Toronto aims to encourage and support the placing of responsibility where it belongs, which is never on the victim, talk about safety in a way that is not victim-blaming, provision of supportive information about giving and getting consent, and work with men and boys to end violence against women. We believe that these are all important pieces of the puzzle to lowering and eventually eradicating the devastatingly common numbers of sexual violence survivors. Following a year of speeches, workshops and online campaigning, on the one-year anniversary of SWTO 2011, SlutWalk Toronto marked April 3rd, 2012 as the first annual International Day Against Victim-Blaming. On May 25, SlutWalk Toronto will host the second SlutWalk in the city that sparked it all. The phenomenal list of speakers this year includes: Judy Rebick, Kim Crosby, Tara Atluri, Jeff Perera, Morgan M. Page, Michele Chai, and Jules Kirouac with her mother Deborah.

No matter what I wear
No matter what I look like
No matter what my gender expression is
No matter how much, how little or what kind of sex I have
No matter what I've done before
No matter where I come from
No matter how my body has been 'devalued' by others
No matter what I've been called
MY BODY IS NOT AN INSULT.

SlutWalk Toronto 2012 is pleased to have support this year from The White Ribbon Campaign, Planned Parenthood Toronto and the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, among others. For more on our allies, please click [here](#). We ask people to join us on May 25, 2012 for SWTO 2012: My Body is Not an Insult, as we take up space to assert everyone's right to live free of sexual violence and victim-blaming. We ask participants of any gender-identification and any age to come dressed as they're comfortable, however they identify. Singles, couples, parents, sisters, brothers, children, friends. Come walk or roll or strut or holler or stomp with us. We meet at Nathan Phillips Square at 5pm.

For media/interview requests:
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